

CLAIMS

1. The use of an agent that interacts with or modulates the expression or activity of a MAL2 polypeptide for the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment and/or prophylaxis of carcinoma.

2. The use according to claim 1, wherein the agent is an antibody, functionally-active fragment, derivative or analogue thereof.

3. The use according to claim 2, wherein the antibody is monoclonal, polyclonal, chimeric, humanised or bispecific, or is conjugated to a therapeutic moiety, detectable label, second antibody or a fragment thereof, an effector or reporter molecule, a cytotoxic agent or cytokine.

4. The use of a MAL2 polypeptide for the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment and/or prophylaxis of carcinoma.

5. The use according to claim 4, wherein the medicament is a vaccine.

6. The use according to any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein the MAL2 polypeptide:

- (a) comprises or consists of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1; or
- (b) is a derivative having one or more amino acid substitutions, modifications, deletions or insertions relative to the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1 which retains the activity of the MAL2 polypeptide.

7. A method for the treatment and/or prophylaxis of carcinoma comprising administering a therapeutically effective amount of an agent which interacts with or modulates the expression or activity of a MAL2 polypeptide.

8. The method according to claim 7, wherein the agent is an antibody, functionally-active fragment, derivative or analogue thereof.

9. The method according to claim 8, wherein the antibody is monoclonal, polyclonal, chimeric, humanised or bispecific, or is conjugated to a therapeutic moiety, detectable label, second antibody or a fragment thereof, an effector or reporter molecule, a cytotoxic agent or cytokine.

10. A method for the treatment and/or prophylaxis of carcinoma comprising administering a therapeutically effective amount of a composition comprising a MAL2 polypeptide.

11. The method according to claim 10, wherein the composition is a vaccine.

12. The method according to any one of claims 7 to 11, wherein the MAL2 polypeptide:

- (a) comprises or consists of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1; or
- (b) is a derivative having one or more amino acid substitutions, modifications, deletions or insertions relative to the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1 which retains the activity of the MAL2 polypeptide.

13. A method of screening for anti-carcinoma agents that interact with a MAL2 polypeptide, said method comprising:

- (a) contacting said polypeptide with a candidate agent; and
- (b) determining whether or not the candidate agent interacts with said polypeptide.

14. The method according to claim 13, wherein the determination of an interaction between the candidate agent and MAL2 polypeptide comprises quantitatively detecting binding of the candidate agent and said polypeptide.

15. A method of screening for anti-carcinoma agents that modulate the expression or activity of a MAL2 polypeptide comprising:

- (i) comparing the expression or activity of said polypeptide in the presence of a candidate agent with the expression or activity of said polypeptide in the absence of the candidate agent or in the presence of a control agent; and
- (ii) determining whether the candidate agent causes the expression or activity of said polypeptide to change.

16. The method according to claim 15, wherein the expression or activity of said polypeptide is compared with a predetermined reference range.

17. The method according to claim 15 or 16, wherein part (ii) additionally comprises selecting an agent which interacts with or modulates the expression or activity of said polypeptide for further testing, or therapeutic or prophylactic use as an anti-carcinoma agent.

18. An agent identified by the method of any of claims 13 to 17, which interacts with or causes the expression or activity of said polypeptide to change.

19. A method of screening for and/or diagnosis or prognosis of carcinoma in a subject, and/or monitoring the effectiveness of carcinoma therapy, which comprises the step of detecting and/or quantifying in a biological sample obtained from said subject, the expression of a MAL2 polypeptide.

20. The method according to claim 19, wherein the expression of said polypeptide is compared to a previously determined reference range or control.

21. The method according to claim 19 or 20, wherein the step of detecting comprises:

(a) contacting the sample with a capture reagent that is specific for a MAL2 polypeptide; and

(b) detecting whether binding has occurred between the capture reagent and said polypeptide in the sample.

22. The method according to claim 21, wherein step (b) comprises detecting the captured polypeptide using a directly or indirectly labelled detection reagent.

23. The method according to claim 21 or 22, wherein the capture reagent is immobilised on a solid phase.

24. The method according to anyone of claims 13 to 17, wherein the polypeptide is detected and/ or quantified using an antibody that specifically binds to a MAL2 polypeptide.

25. The method according to claim 24, wherein the antibody is conjugated to a detectable label, or a second antibody or a fragment thereof.

26. A diagnostic kit comprising a capture reagent specific for a MAL2 polypeptide, reagents and instructions for use.

27. The use according to any one of claims 1 to 6, or the method according to any one of claims 7 to 17 or 19-25, wherein the carcinoma is breast and/or colon and/or stomach and/or liver cancer.